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PRICE SIXPENCE.

AFTER
THE
BATTLE OF DORKING;
OR,
WHAT BECAME OF THE INVADERS!

Reprinted (by Special Permission) from

"THE TAXPAPER,"

FOR JULY

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY GEORGE MADDICK,
AT 3, SHOE LANE, FLEET STREET.

1871.

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THE Battle of Dorking, originally published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and which has since appeared separately, has met with so enormous a success, and has been talked about by so many people, that it would be interesting to inquire closely into the

causes that have given it so sudden a fame. It is well written, but no better than an average *Blackwood* article. The author writes on military subjects like a soldier, but so does Col. HAMLEY, who wields a more practised pen. He presages the sudden downfall of England's greatness, but so have many before him any time these three hundred years. Perhaps the real secret, after all, lies in its appropriateness. At the moment when everybody was canvassing the shortcomings of Mr. CARDWELL's abortive bill for the reorganisation of the army, and expressing disappointment that a measure which promised to

placed us above panics for the future really did nothing but abolish the purchase of commissions, getting rid of the officers we have, without making any effort to procure others in their stead, "The Battle of Dorking" appeared, to show us what might be the possible result of our criminal carelessness. It is unnecessary now to enter into any account of this article. Everybody has read it, and it certainly contains lessons that everybody should take to heart. Especially should Mr. CARDWELL ponder well the picture of disorganisation, presented by all the departments, which would only too certainly be realised in the event of any

sudden strain. No commissariat, no transport, no intelligence corps, the first hints of the doings of the enemy derived from the correspondents of morning newspapers, all this, we fear, under Mr. CARDWELL, would be anything but an exaggerated statement. Then, too, the want of officers for the Volunteers, the ignorance of each corps as to its destination, and the unfitness of leaders, accustomed to regulars only, to command gentlemen volunteers, are evils that half the force have been crying out about for years. Who can doubt that with Mr. CARDWELL's peculiar notions of arithmetic, the sudden return of all the withdrawn

volunteers to the force on the first outbreak of war would find the authorities utterly without rifles to arm them with? Yet, admitting all this, we by no means believe in the mournful picture drawn by the author of the "Battle of Dorking."

We do not think our fleet is to be destroyed, our territory invaded, our coal and iron to give way, and our national spirit to be utterly and irremediably broken all in one short week. But it would be no fault of the Ministry that we escaped. The utter incapacity of Messrs. GLADSTONE and CARDWELL to grasp the needs and the demands of England at this moment,

is only less marvellous than the quietness and apparent calm with which the people permit their work to remain undone.

But it may be depended on most certainly that with the first sound of war, all this calm would disappear. We will admit with our author that England might declare war in a moment of indignation without waiting to consider whether or not she were prepared. It has been her custom always, to weigh only the justice of her cause, not its strength. We will admit that our foes had already prepared fleets of transports, ready to launch hosts of armed men upon our shores.

We will admit, even, not that our fleet was defeated, but that it was decoyed away from the real point of attack while the enemy's landing was effected. But at that point we at once join issue with our author. As in 1855 the people of England, with one voice, insisted that Messrs. GLADSTONE and CARDWELL, with their inane colleagues, should be dismissed from office, to be replaced by PALMERSTON, so, in such an emergency, would they dismiss them again at a moment's notice, and the instinct of the people would not fail to choose the fitting successor to PALMERSTON. The able-bodied of all ranks would rise as one

man. The railway companies that can send a hundred thousand men, women, and children away on a Whit-Monday excursion, and *bring them back*, would be equal to the task of conveying an army to any point that might be named. The invaders might have their small triumph at Worthing, by capturing a dozen bathing-machines and some lodging-house keepers ; but by the time their advance into the interior was commenced, the fleet would have discovered its mistake, and returned. Their transports and store-ships would be utterly destroyed, and they would have no choice but to march on London. The field of battle on which

they would be encountered by the English advance has been so graphically described by the author of the "Battle of Dorking," that we have no wish to change the site. The Germans and their allies, remembering their easy victories in France, might march gaily to the attack, but would soon find that their fiercest onsets were useless to drive back the sons of that race which, for a thousand years, has been taught that its one duty in battle is to stand and die. Madly would they urge their overwhelming masses against the hill; again and again would they charge the gap. But all in vain! The now thin lines stand

their ground as firmly as did the serried ranks that were there when the fight began. Nightfall approaches, and the diminished numbers of the English cause Lord Strathnairn to hesitate whether he shall risk everything on a final charge "all along the line," or shall await the reinforcements hurrying from Lancashire, from Northumberland, and from Scotland, which he knows the night must bring. But, hark ! the point is settled for him. A cheer is heard far to the enemy's rear, such as was never uttered, save from the throats of British sailors. The Admiral, having destroyed the enemy's shipping, and finding nothing more to

do at sea, had immediately landed all his marines and half his crews. Quickly have they followed in the track of the invader, and, in the nick of time, here they are, big guns and all! There is no more to be done. The affrighted Germans, who never yet have met such foes, and scarce conceive them human, throw away their arms and cry for quarter. The slaughter is terrific, the captures innumerable. No more the pious old KING thanks PROVIDENCE, for he is safely under lock and key, and he the Silent in Seven languages hastens to cry out loudly in one of them, for a sailor has him tightly in his grasp, and

he shivers at the fierce looks and heavy cutlass of his captor. Not a man of the invading force is left alive who is not a prisoner !

The morning brings telegrams from every quarter of the kingdom. A squadron of transports, attempting to land on the eastern coast, was driven against the rocks by a sudden storm, and not a ship, not a soul, escaped. A detachment of the International created a diversion by landing in Ireland to proclaim a Republic, only to find, that, like a bickering wife, HIBERNIA quarrels with her husband JOHN BULL simply because he never allows her to have another enemy ;

but now, having the opportunity, she has shown both her love and her fighting powers, and this party also has disappeared from among the living.

A day to secure our triumphs, to guard against a recurrence of the trial, and to dispose of our prisoners—the Emperor-King is sent under a strong guard to Claremont—then we hear news from Germany. There, all is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. In Prussia, that is. The despised nation—that England—whose only policy was “obliteration,” has “obliterated” the conquerors of France, the veterans of the Bohemian

campaign ! Their EMPEROR a prisoner, and, worse than all, Germany no longer united. For the smaller States have taken advantage of the first reverse to resume their independence. Hanover has flocked, almost without a dissentient voice, to the standard of King GEORGE. Bavaria recalls her army ; Cassell, Baden, Saxony, Ham-
burgh, all proclaim their independence, and their alliance with England ; Austria, ever jealous of her rival, is ready at once to foment and encourage the new league, and Count BERNSTORFF has been sent in haste from Berlin, with orders from BISMARCK to "make peace at any price."

In the meantime, there is gloom and sorrow mingled with our triumph home. Many homes are desolate. Not only those which had sons in the army, for this time the sorrows of war have permeated all classes, for the Volunteers fought gloriously, and died in numbers. There is mourning in Westminster Hall, for the bar is decimated ; in the Royal Academy, for the artists were in the van ; not a journal, not a theatre, but has lost at least one member from its staff. And so through all grades. The result is, that England is more closely, more firmly, united than ever. Only two men are shut out from sympathy, and are turned to

with vengeful thoughts by all the land. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War are in prison, and will be tried by court-martial; in all probability shot, *pour encourager les autres*.

Time has gone on, and Lord GRANVILLE has made known the only terms of peace he will accept. A war indemnity of £200,000,000 to be paid in such manner as Mr. LOWE shall decide upon. All war-ships belonging to Germany to be delivered up to England. Schleswig-Holstein to be restored to Denmark. All the smaller States to be allowed to decide on their future form of government. King WILLIAM

to abdicate in favour of his son, who had opposed the war. The territories of Belgium to be considerably increased at the expense of Germany. Alsace and Lorraine to be restored to France. The old KING, MOLTKE, the RED PRINCE, and all the officers above the rank of Colonel, to remain prisoners until the indemnity be paid in full. Onerous and harsh as these seem to be, it must be remembered that they are founded on Prussia's own terms to France, and BISMARCK must yield. He is now as helpless as JULES FAVRE was. Every line of seacoast, every river, is blockaded; the Danes, the Dutch, the Belgians are in arms;

the conquered German States, with Bavaria at their head, are ready for revolt; the announcement of our demand for Alsace and Lorraine has awakened France, already burning for revenge. The reign of the *junkers* is at an end, and England is once more acknowledged the leader and the peacemaker of Europe.

Such is *our* vision of the "Battle of Dorking;" surely a more probable and less strained one than that of the writer in *Blackwood*: who requires insurrections in India and in Ireland; coalitions extending from one hemisphere to the other; a sudden failure of our mineral wealth; unknown

and invisible instruments of destruction to be used at sea by an almost land-locked people; and, last not least, an utter destruction of all national spirit by one defeat—that defeat, even according to his own description, almost a fluke! We do not, and will not, believe that Englishmen are yet so degraded, that they have yet fallen so far from their old character, that the men who fought at Inkermann, at Lucknow, and at Delhi have left no successors to uphold the proud but not vain-glorious boast that “Britons never will be slaves.” But be he right, or be we right, our responsible rulers, unless they take rapid and

